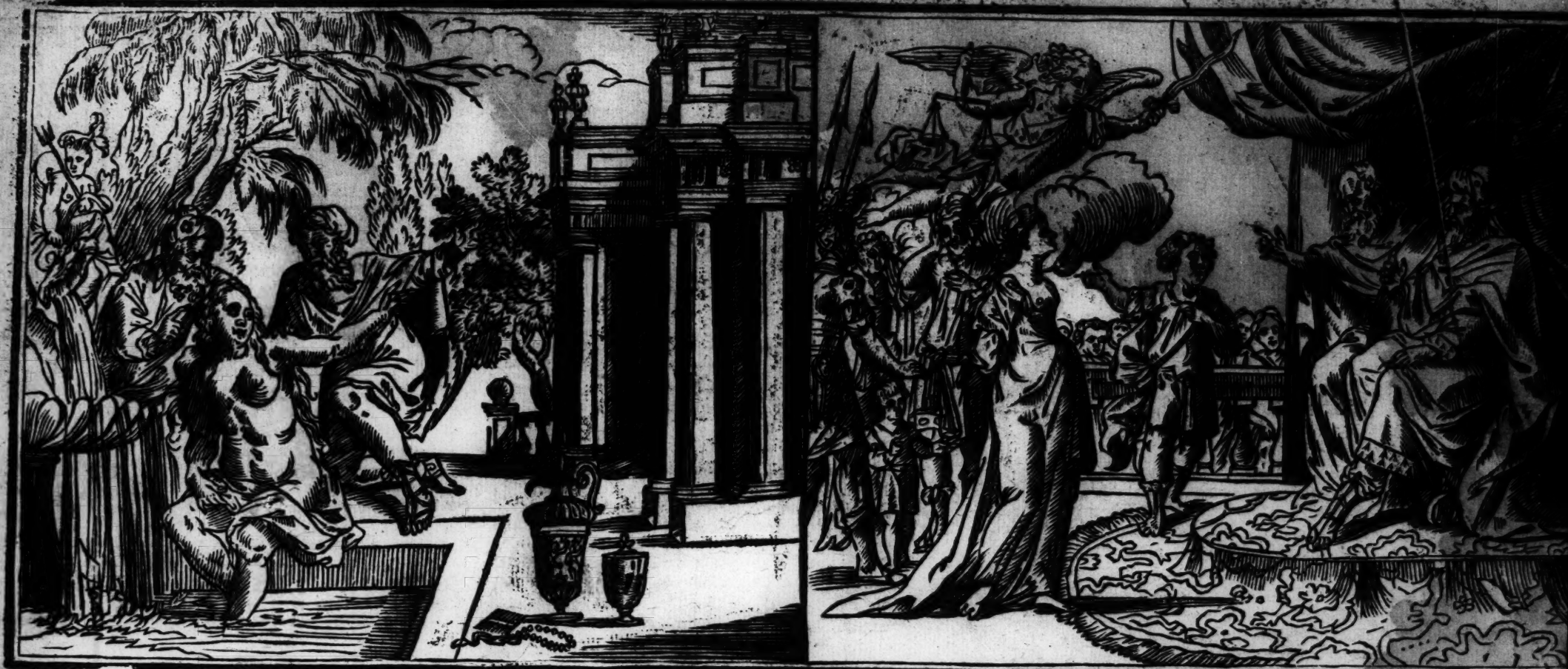


The Prancing Swearer; Or, Perjury Militant.

18. May. 1686. An HEROICK Poem.

By C. M.



AS Babylon of Old was fertile grown
In Perjuries, enough to cloud the Sun;
So has our Age (unhappy 'tis to tell)
To Her approach'd the nearest Parallel.
Unheard of Villains, in our Matchless Age,
Publickly came on the Tribunal Stage;
Whose Poys'nous Breaths endeavour'd to defame
The First of Rank in Sacred Honour's Name:
But as they are, so ever may they be,
The scum and dregs of open Infamy.

IN that Proud City, (to whose Sovereign Sway
The Eastern World did humble Homage pay)
Imperious, Haughty, and by name
Babylon, as well deserving, was by Heav'n,
For a Chast Wife, the Fair Susanna giv'n.
Susanna! Whose unspotted Life and Grace,
Shew'd her the Daughter of good Chelcias.
In Piety matchless was the Parallel,
Whether the Child or Father did excel.
Besides the Blessing of a Virtuous Mate,
Heav'n blest'd him with a Large and Fair Estate.
His goodly House, his Grots, his Garden fair,
Invites the Jews to walk and take the Air.
Where must they go, but to good Joacim?
He loves them All, as All he thinks loves him.
But Oh! no Pleasures here below are found
To be compleat; but an Eternal Round
Of changes, flow: Thus does a sudden Ebb
Stop Joacim's Tides of Joys oth' Marriage-Bed.
The Time was come, that Babylon must name
Two of her Elders, to support the Fame
And Grandeur of her Laws; who Judge and Hear
All the Events of the Ensuing Year.
Chosen unhappy Choyce, cry'd Heav'n! who knew
That Punishments must Babylon pursue,
When her old Judges, judge not what is True.
At Joacim's House these Two did much abide,
And all depending suits of Law decide.
It chanc'd (the Business of the Hall being done,
And Crowds of People all returned home)
Susanna in her Garden walk't alone:
The Elders this observ'd, (so sharply bent
Are lustful Eyes upon the Innocent;)
The more they gaze, the more they do desire;
Her Beauty Fann'd their Feavourish Coales of Fire:
Hot burns the Calenture; no Med'cin's found;
Susanna gave, Susanna cures the wound.
These wretched Elders joyntly do conspire
In chaste Susanna's Arms to quench their Fire:
Secret they lie purdeiu, and watch the time
I'th' Garden, for to act their horrid Crime.
And loe! unguarded Innocence comes in,
(Her Maids attending,) thinking no design,
Was 'gainst her Honour laid: (They only fear,
Whose Crowding Ills the sting of Conscience bear.)
The fervent day, fraught full with Phæbus Beams,
Invites Susanna to the cooling Streams;
Willing to bath, thinking no mortal Eye
Uncover'd Innocence was there to spy.
Then on her Maids she forthwith laid Commands,
To fetch her Oyl and Wash-Balls for her Hands;
To shut the Garden Doors, lest any one,
Whilst bathing, should approach to her alone:

The which, no sooner she to them had said,
But her Commands were willingly obey'd.
No sooner left, but from the secret Grove
The Elders rush, swell'd full with poys'nous Love
Tell her their purpose; bid consent or dy;
Death is your Lott, except with us you ly:
If you refuse, against you we will swear,
That a young Youth in your Embraces here
You did Carefs, all naked as you are.
She wept, and said, What Land or Sea is free?
What Refuge now remains for Wretched me?
Surpriz'd! Betray'd! by Two curs'd Villains Rage!
Nought but Almighty Power can it assuage.

Oh! better 'tis to suffer by your Hands
Than Violate th' Almighty's High Commands.
This said, her Tears and Sorrows spake the rest;
But nothing mov'd Compassion in their Breast:
These Shamming Elders seize the Innocent;
And to take Life, and Honour, both are bent.
The noyse being heard, the Servants all did run,
To know what in the Garden then was done:
The Elders blast Susanna with a Ly;
(What Innocence is safe from Perjury?)
'Tis noys'd, and Rumours still in telling grow;
As rolling Snow-Balls ever gather Snow.
The People flock where Joacim doth dwell,
To hear these Judges their Sham story tell:
Who, in the Presence of the People, sent
For Chast Susanna, who was Innocent.
She comes, attended with a numerous Throng
Of Kindred, weeping at her wondrous Wrong:
Her self serene, and beauteous to behold;
Fram'd by Angelick Art, in Heav'nly Mould.
But, Ah! what help can Beauty her afford?
'Twas that, at first, unsheath'd the Villains sword;
The sharpest sword, the Villains Perjur'd Word.
Laying their hands on fair Susanna's head,
In publick to the people, thus they said:
As in good Joacim's Garden we did walk,
Of Truth and Justice privately to talk;
This Woman, and her Maids, mean time came in;
(Alas! we little thinking 'twas to sin;)
But her Attendants, she soon sent away,
And shut the Doors, lest they should Her betray.
Then to Her came a Youth, whose lustful Charms
She gladly clasp'd within her willing Arms.
This Wickedness we seeing with our Eyes,
'Cause 'twas Susanna, strangely did surprize;
Then made we hast to seize th' Adulterous Man;
But he forc't ope the Door, and from us ran.
Susanna then we took, who now stands here;
But her Adulterer she would not declare.
This, and much more, we both can Testify:
Therefore tis just, Susanna forthwith Dy.
Now the Assembly did these Men believe,
Thinking that Judges never would deceive,
And spotless Innocence of Life bereave.
With a Loud Voice, Susanna then did Cry;
O God, in whom alone's Omnipiscency!
Loe, here I am, by Villains Perjury,
For what I never did, Adjudg'd to dy.
Almighty Lord, Thou knowst my Innocence;
Thou knowst, they swear under a false Pretence;

And Perjury's their only Evidence.
Th' Almighty heard the Innocent thus Cry;
And as they led her to her Destiny,
A Sprightly Youth cry'd out, (Daniel by name)
Why do you thus the Innocent defame?
The Crowding People turning, ask'd the Truth,
And Meaning of those words, spoke by the Youth?
To whom; Your Folly I must plainly tell:
Are ye such Fools, ye Sons of Israel,
Thus rashly to Condemn the Innocent,
Without examining these men's Intent?
Return, return, unto the Judgement place;
Where you shall hear these wretched Elders case.
At which the Judges to him did reply
Come publick speak, where lies the Villain?
Pat these, says he, in separate Rooms aside,
And the whole matter I will soon decide.
Then calls he one, and to Him thus did say;
Thy wicked Perjuries appear to day:
Thou hast maliciously false Judgement given;
And black'd with Lies, what is as clear as Heav'n;
But hearken now to what the Lord doth say;
The Innocent and Just thou shalt not slay:
Under what Tree did You this Woman see,
Committing with the Youth Adultery?
Who Answer made, under a MASTICK TREE.
The Other being brought, thus he began;
Of Judah Thou art not, but Canaan;
Beauty to You has prov'd a Golden Bait;
And drawn upon You an Impending Fate.
Under what Tree did You this Woman see,
Committing with the Youth Adultery?
His answer was, under an OAKEN TREE.
Your Oaths, says Daniel, are more false than Hell
Could ever broach, to make a Parallel;
And Heav'n's Revenge has justly found this Day,
Your Crimes with equal Punishments to pay.
Th' amaz'd Assembly, with Confused Noise,
Prais'd her Deliverer with Heart and Voice.
The Elders from their Honours were displac'd,
Prov'd Perjur'd Men, abandon'd and disgrac'd;
And as themselves endeavour'd, were they serv'd;
Suffering that Day Susanna was preserv'd.
Then all Her Friends to God did Praises sound,
'Cause no Diffionesty in Her was found.
And from that Day the People did Proclaim,
Daniel most Wise, and Chast Susanna's Fame.

THUS Reader, hast thou seen the blasted Times
Of Israels Honour, and her causing Crimes
Here, not the Low and Humble doe devise
To cut off Life and Fame with Perjuries:
But the great Rulers, (whose peculiar Care
Is Mercy, Truth, and Justice) falsly swear.
Unhappy Land, and People; for what Curse
Than Perjury can fall on Nations Worse?
What shield has Innocence, if that the Friend
Will perjur'd be, Her self for to defend?
None, none, but Heav'n, could poor Susanna find
To Innocence may Heav'n still prove so kind:
And for Revenge to perjur'd men, may Heav'n
Decree the Elders portion to be giv'n.

Licensed, and Entered according to Order.